

VZCZCXRO2028
PP RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHKH #0263/01 0561251
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 251251Z FEB 09
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3089
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000263

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A A/S CARTER AND AF/SPG, NSC FOR MGAVIN AND CHUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/24/2019

TAGS: ASEC PGOV PREL KPKO UN AU SU

SUBJECT: FORMER REBELS (TURNED GOVERNMENT AGENTS?) PROMOTE FUR UNIFICATION

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On February 23, members of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Free Will (SLM/FW,) a rebel movement which entered the Darfur Peace Agreement after Minni Minnawi, told CDA Fernandez that they are working to unite the Fur tribe. According to these contacts, their work is needed as the Fur currently suffer from two different Shura Councils, rival rebel leaders, and an almost completely displaced and traumatized population. Although many observers completely dismiss Declaration of Commitment (DOC) Groups like SLM/FW as a Government invention for infiltrating and dividing the rebel movements, much of what the rebels argued is true. Nonetheless, Post suspects that the GoS may have sent these individuals to probe increased U.S. interest in the Fur tribe, and urges caution when dealing with all DOC groups.
END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) On February 23, CDA Fernandez met the following SLM/FW representatives at the U.S. Embassy: Baddr Eddin El Tijani Adam, Nasr Eddin Mohamed Abbeker, and Musa Ali Bahar. These SLM/FW representatives initiated the meeting through a locally-engaged staff member at the U.S. Embassy. The individuals originally came to the Embassy a day earlier than their scheduled appointment and then again returned on February 23.

¶3. (C) Badr Eddin El Tijani Adam opened the meeting by thanking the U.S. for its efforts in Darfur - "the conflict that has primarily affected the Fur tribe." "Our people have been completely displaced, and our lands are occupied by (ethnic Arab) settlers from Nigeria and West Africa," stated Adam, citing Wadi Salih as one area with a heavy concentration of new West African immigrants. Adam then vowed that the young Fur people will not submit to this displacement and requested U.S. intervention and pressure on the GOS. Adam sharply criticized the recent negotiations in Doha between JEM and the GoS, and said that the GoS should first implement the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement.

¶4. (C) These SLM/FW representatives then asserted that their movement can lead unification efforts for the Fur tribe. The GOS has divided the Fur through establishing its own version of the Fur Shura Council, by driving a wedge between rival rebel movements, and through encouraging the resettlement of others on Fur lands, said these contacts. The SLM/FW representatives then stated that UNAMID needs to provide better protection to the people of Darfur. CDA Fernandez quickly responded that the U.S. views GoS harassment and attacks on IDP camps as a "red line." He also explained that the GOS has prevented U.S. outreach to the Fur tribe through blocking U.S. visits to Fur areas such as Jebel Marra or Wadi Salih. He warned the visitors that, while the USG strongly supports a unified Fur voice as an essential part of peace in Darfur, any Khartoum-based effort will have

to overcome the suspicion that it is a regime plot. A reconstituted Fur Shura Council would also have to demonstrate its independence and credibility to the mostly Fur IDP camp population in Darfur.

¶5. (SBU) At the close of the meeting the SLM/fw representatives presented a general 2-page proposal on unifying the Fur tribe to the CDA. The proposal recommends seven vague principles (e.g. "guarantee the rights of the IDPs...") for strengthening the Fur and their relationship with other tribes in Darfur. The representatives also delivered the lengthy strategic plan of the Compensation Commission. (Note: Both documents are in Arabic and available by request from Post. End Note.)

¶6. (C) COMMENT: Although Post agrees almost with everything that was said in the meeting, the background of the individuals, the nature of their request, and the timing of the meeting raise a series of red flags. SLM/Free Will was never just a Fur movement (their founder was a Tunjur who served as an SLA-AW negotiator in Abuja,) and it is disingenuous for them to portray themselves as representatives of the Fur. Furthermore, since the death of their founder Abdel Rahman Musa Abaker in 2008, SLM/Free Will has fragmented into several factions. It is therefore unrealistic for this faction to assert that it, with its own internal problems, could ever unite the Fur people. Former loaally-engaged staff member and Darfur expert Hamid Nur told poloff after the meeting that these individuals are directly controlled by Sudanese National Intelligence (NISS) which is also quite interested in Fur politics. The fact that they were also passing documents from the Compensation Committee,

KHARTOUM 00000263 002 OF 002

whose chairman Abulgasim Ahmed Abulgasim, is widely believed to be controlled by Intelligence Chief Salah Ghosh, also makes us deeply suspicious of their motives. As the U.S. continues its outreach to the Fur tribe, it is possible that Sudanese officials are getting wind of this initiative and attempting to enter the game. For now, we will keep these individuals at an arm's length, and remain suspicious of DOC groups attempting to warm up to the U.S. Government.

FERNANDEZ